

By Stefan J. Bos

<http://www.worthynews.com/7291-tajikistan-churches-face-closures-uncertain-future>

The Religion Law seems part of Rahmon's efforts to strengthen his power base and "legalise harsh policies already adopted" towards the population, **the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** said .

"The picture for religious freedom in Tajikistan is growing dim," said the Commission, which advises the U.S. government on religious freedom in the world. "The passage of this problematic new law could severely limit religious freedoms in Tajikistan," it added in a recent report.

Like elsewhere in Central Asia, most people in Tajikistan, a mountainous Persian-speaking nation, practice the Sunni branch of Islam, but there is a substantial Shi'ite minority.